

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 2-4 have been amended to depend from new claim 10 and claims 5-8 have been amended to depend from new apparatus claim 9. New claims 9 and 10 track the limitations of canceled claim 1. Amendments to the claims are supported by the original claims, specification and drawing. No new matter has been added.

The specification has been amended to correct formalities noted by the Examiner, including adding headings throughout the specification. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 7 and 8 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to clarify which features have different temperatures, and are now definite. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 02-151,358 (JP '358). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 1 has been canceled, rendering this rejection moot as to that claim. Applicants will address this rejection to the extent it may apply to new claims 9 and 10.

JP '358 discloses a selector valve plug 10 with separate portions 10a and 10b at opposing ends of the plug and a middle section 10c having a reduced diameter. When in a right-oriented position, portion 10b shuts off a gate 7 from a cylinder 3 while at the same time the center portion 10c provides an opening between gate 7 and evacuating passage 9. When in a left-orientated position, portion 10b shuts off communication between gate 7 and evacuating passage 9 and allows molten metal stored in cylinder 3 to pass into gate 7 to fill cavity 1. Thus, valve plug 10 is configured to provide both an evacuating function (evacuating cavity 1 and gate 7 prior to filling) as well as a filling function (facilitating flow of molten metal between cylinder 3 and cavity 1 and gate 7) depending on the linear position of the valve plug 10.

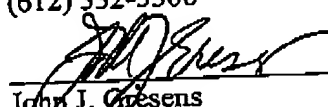
JP '358 fails to disclose an isolation valve for evacuating the mold cavity and injection channel and a separate chamber valve that is positioned between the casting chamber and the injection channel, as required by claims 9 and 10. Because JP '358 discloses a single valve that provides two functions rather than two valves that separately perform the functions of evacuating and controlling an opening between the casting chamber and the injection channel, JP '358 fails to disclose every limitation of claims 9 and 10, and the claims that depend from them. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicants' attorney below at 612.371.5265.

Respectfully submitted,

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